

Perceptions of environmental impacts of tourism: A case study at ACAP, Nepal

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Abstract:

Tourism development and associated environmental impacts are evident in various regions of the world as communities struggle to find an optimal balance between economics and conservation. The growing pains of tourism development have usually fragmented local residents with respect to their perception of impacts and support for tourism. Empirical research has analyzed resident perception and attitudes towards tourism impacts but has largely focused on economic and socio-cultural impacts in mass tourism destinations and rural areas. The purpose of this study was to examine the perception of environmental impacts of tourism between residents and managers within a protected area, i.e. Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP), Nepal. Data were collected on-site among local residents and managers. Environmental impacts of tourism were operationalized using 13 items on a five-point Likert scale (strongly agree to strongly disagree). Overall, on comparison of descriptive and statistical analyses, local residents were consistently more likely than managers to perceive fewer negative and greater positive impacts of tourism on the environment.

Keywords: environmental impacts; residents; managers; Annapurna Conservation Area Project

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